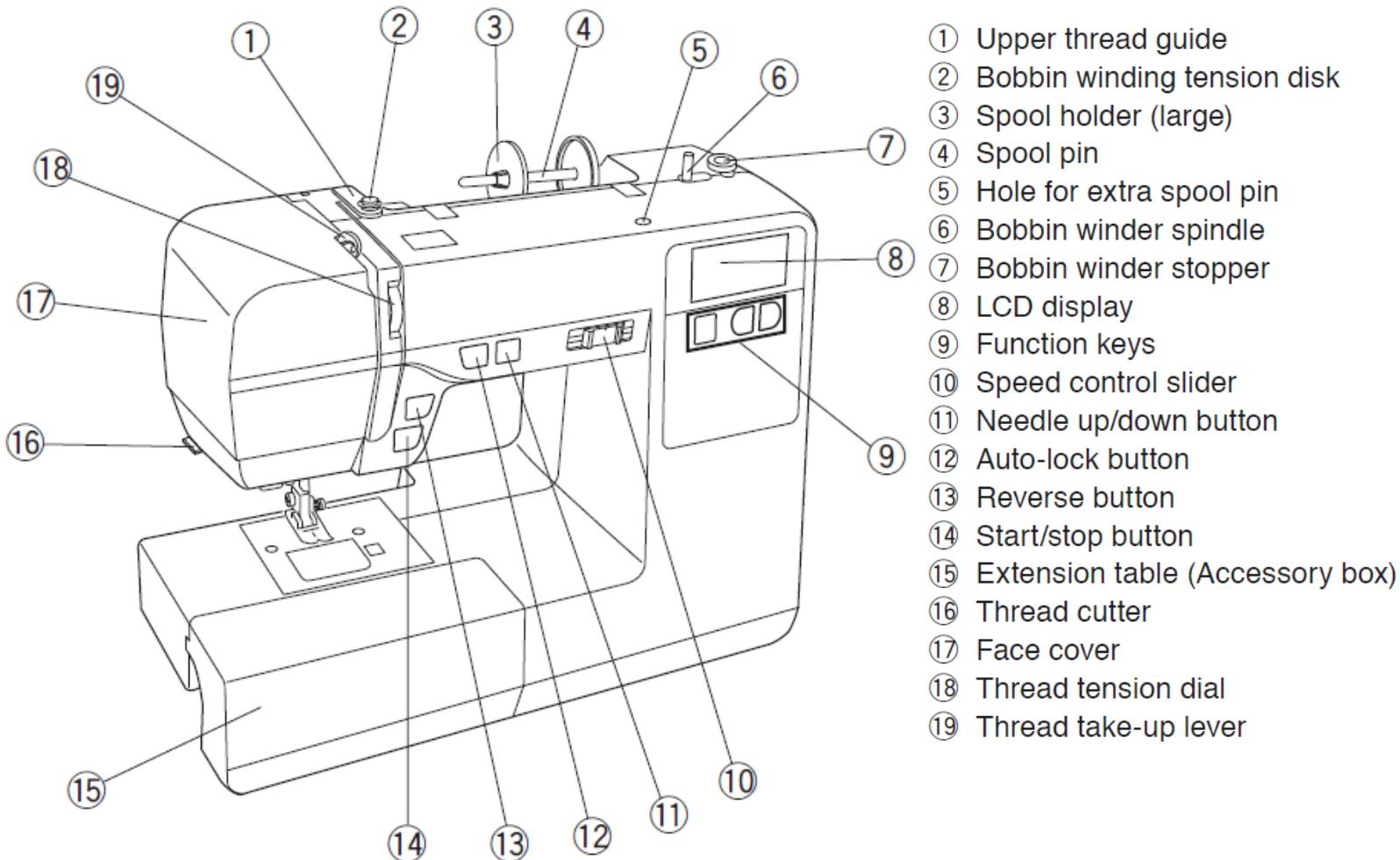


An introduction to using a Sewing Machine

At EPIC we have 5 Janome sewing machines. This guide is based on the Janome JW8100. The manual is very good and we recommend reading it! Download here <https://www.bu.edu/epic/files/2024/01/Janome-jw8100.pdf> or scan the qr code to the right



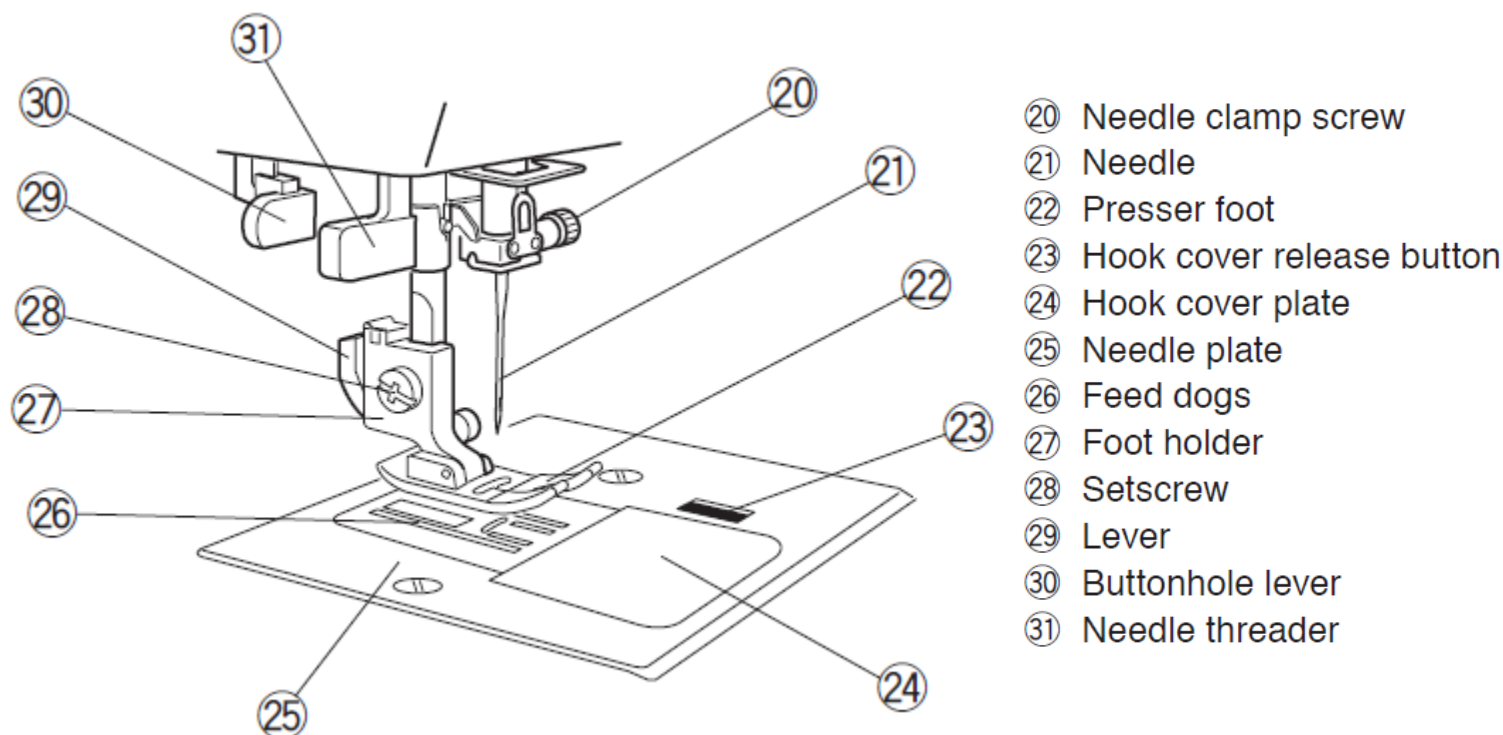
1. Parts of the Machine



Familiarize yourself with the locations in the diagram. Each machine has a kit of accessories, foot pedal and power cord - there is also an accessory storage box inside the extension table.

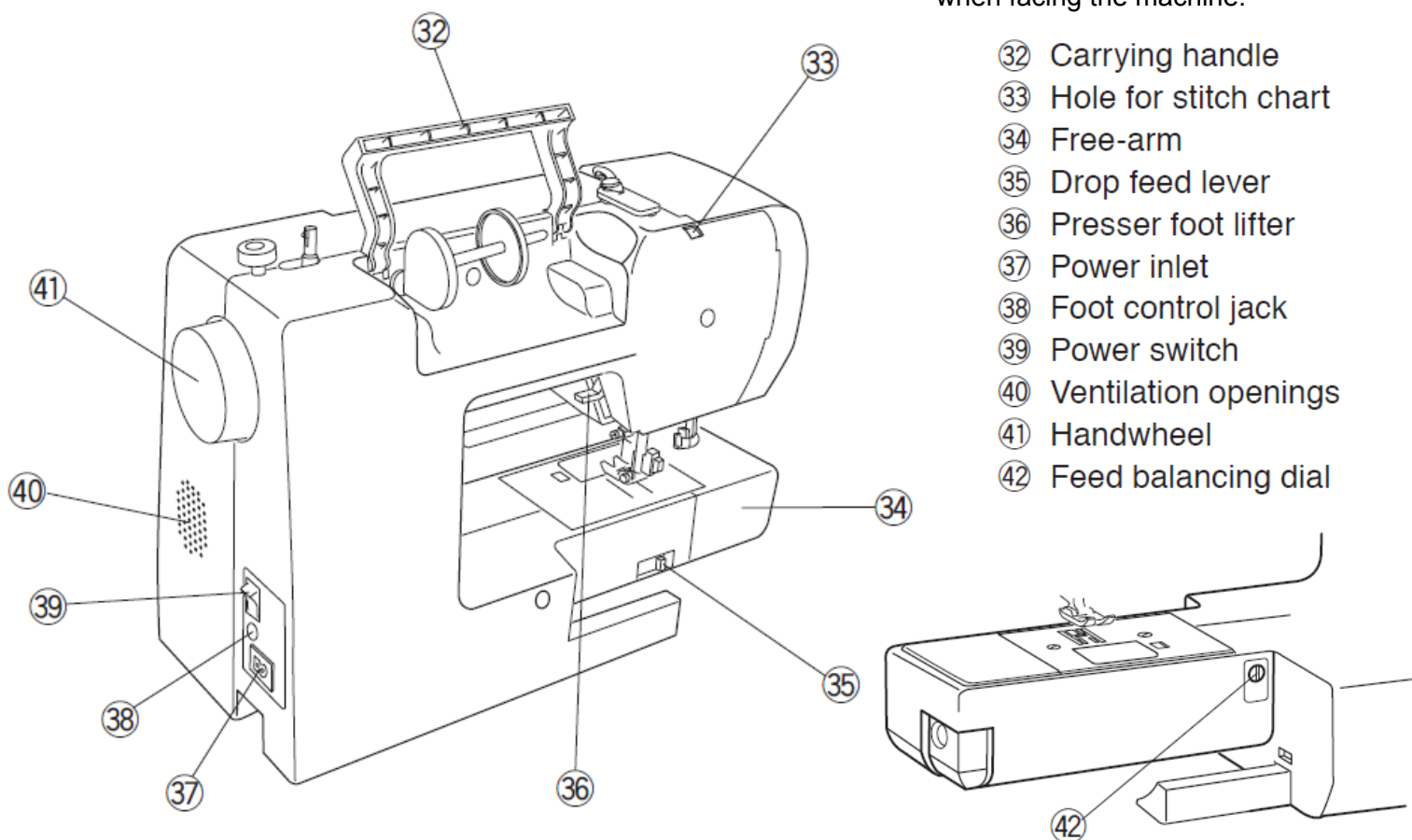
- (1) The upper thread guide - The order in which to thread the machine is numbered on the machine face starting with 1 (See pg 17 of manual)
- (2) Bobbin winding tension disk - When winding a bobbin you will first loop the thread around this tension disk then thread it through the bobbin before you place it on the (6) spindle
- (3) Spool holder (large) - This keeps the main thread spool on the (4) Spool pin

- (4) Spool pin - This holds the main thread spool (See pg 14 of manual)
- (5) Hole for extra spool pin - Where you mount an accessory - stored in (15) expansion table - to attach a second spool of thread. For use with double needles or to fill a bobbin without unthreading the machine. (See pg 14 of manual)
- (6) Bobbin winder spindle - Use a Janome compatible plastic bobbin, thread through the hole in the top and place it on the bobbin winder spindle, push it to the right to engage bobbin filling. In general, use the same thread for needle and bobbin. (See pg 15 of manual)
- (7) Bobbin spindle stopper - The stopper is to the right of the bobbin winder spindle, this stops the machine when the bobbin is full (See pg 15 of manual)
- (8) LCD display - Displays the type of stitch selected and indicates default settings for stitch width and length. The display also indicates which type of presser foot should be used with the stitch type. (See pg 8 of manual)
- (9) Function keys - Select the stitch type, width and length (See pg 8 of manual)
- (10) Speed control slider - You can set the maximum speed for sewing, as a beginner you may want to start at a slower speed, a slow speed is also useful for detail work and thick materials. If attached the foot pedal also modulates the speed with the amount of pressure applied. If you use the Start/Stop button the machine will use the speed selected on the speed control slider. (See pg 6 of manual)
- (11) Needle up/down button - This button will move the needle up or down depending on its current position. By default the machine will stop with the needle up, moving the needle down can be handy for starting the stitch and ending the stitch when you want to rotate the fabric to sew around a corner. (See pg 12 of manual)
- (12) Auto-lock button - This will lock the stitch in place, depending on the stitch selected either immediately or at the end of the pattern. This is a less visible lock than using the Reverse button. (See pg 7 of manual)
- (13) Reverse button - While this button is pressed the machine will sew in reverse. This can be used to lock the beginning and end of a stitch. When some stitches are selected the machine will use a locking stitch instead of reverse. If you are sewing forward and press this button it will reverse in the same speed, if you are sewing with the stop/start and in a stop state the reverse will sew slowly. (See pg 7 of manual)
- (14) Start/stop button - If not using the foot pedal the start/stop button will operate the machine. The speed control slider (10) controls the speed when using this button.
- (15) Extension table - This attaches to the Free-arm to extend the size of the work space, also there is a storage compartment inside. This machine also has a Large extension table accessory for more table space. (See pgs 6-7 of manual)
- (16) Thread cutter - use this to cut off the thread, always leave a 5-6" tail of thread beyond the needle.
- (17) Face cover - panel access for adjustment of needle height
- (18) Thread tension dial - Controls the tension of the needle thread, the top (needle) and bottom (bobbin) thread must have balanced tension. The manual suggests a needle tension range for each stitch type - but changes to type of fabric and layers of fabric will also require tension adjustments. (See pgs 10-11 of manual for tension description, Pages 23-50 of manual describe how to use each type of stitch and suggested tension range)
- (19) Thread take-up lever - Step 3 of threading the machine (See pg 17 of manual)



- (20) Needle clamp screw - Holds the needle in place. When changing the needle, turn the machine off, turn the hand wheel CCW to move the needle all the way up. Loose needle clamp screw CCW. Install the needle with the flat side of the head away from you, all the way up in the needle holder, tighten needle clamp screw CW. (See pg 13 of manual)
- (21) Needle - Do not use a worn or bent needle. There are different size needles for different fabrics (See pg 13 of manual)
- (22) Presser foot - The foot pushes down on the fabric as you sew, there are different foot types available, the LCD display will indicate the suggested foot type you should use once you select your stitch. (See pg 4 of manual for illustration of feet in accessory kit)
- (23) Hook cover release button - This slides to the right to release the cover
- (24) Hook cover plate - Access to the bobbin holder and also marked with guides for seam allowance (See pg 14 and 21 of manual)
- (25) Needle plate - This plate has openings where the needle will pass through to the bobbin case area below. Usually this is only removed for maintenance. The plate is marked with guides for seam allowance. (See pg 21 of manual)
- (26) Feed dogs - The feed dogs move up and down as the needle stitches to move your fabric forwards or backwards. Normally they are up but in special cases like free motion quilting or using the buttonhole tool they can be lowered. (See pg 12 of manual)
- (27) Foot holder - This is a holder to attach quick-release style feet. The groove at the front is what attaches to the pin across the top of the foot (See pg 9 of manual)
- (28) Setscrew - Attaches the foot holder to the Presser foot lifter (See pg 9 of manual)

- (29) Lever - Locks or unlocks the foot holder to the foot (See pg 9 of manual)
- (30) Buttonhole lever - Lower this when using the buttonhole foot (see pg 28-35 of manual)
- (31) Needle threader - Lower this to thread the needle (see pg 18 of manual) If you are unable to use the Needle threader the needle can be threaded best with a freshly cut thread end, there is also a wire tool in the sewing kit that operates in the same way - you place the wire tool through the needle from the back, feed the thread through the opening in the wire and pull the tool back through the eye of the needle. Thread should be fed from front to back when facing the machine.



- (32) Carrying handle - Make sure the handle is down before threading the machine so it is not in the way. Hold the machine from the handle and bottom when moving.
- (33) Hole for stitch chart - The mount for the stitch chart which shows you all of the stitch options available. The chart can be folded down when the machine is put in the dust cover for storage.
- (34) Free-arm - When the table accessories are not installed the Free-arm is the narrowest setup for the machine so that you may put fabric openings you need to sew around over this arm (ie. sleeve or hem).
- (35) Drop feed lever - Moves the feed dog up for use or down when you don't want to use it. The feed dog moves up and down with the needle so it feeds your material forward as you sew. If you want to feed the material yourself you can move it down out of the way. The change you make to the feed dog position lever will not happen until you start sewing. For

material that is thin and prone to bunching up you can use the Even Feed Foot to improve smooth feeding of the material, this is in the machines accessories kit.

- (36) Presser foot lifter - Used to move the foot up or down, lift the foot up when you are setting up your material in place to sew, move the foot down onto the material before you begin sewing. There are 3 positions: very high, high and down.
- (37) Power inlet - Where you attach the power cord in the machine accessories kit
- (38) Foot control jack - Where you attach the foot pedal in the machine accessories kit - the foot pedal is optional, this machine can be controlled by the Start/stop button (14). Note the Start/stop button (14) is disabled when the foot pedal is attached.
- (39) Power switch - O is off I is on, turn off when done, it does not auto-off
- (40) Ventilation openings - Do not block
- (41) Handwheel - Moves the needle - CCW needle up, CW needle down
- (42) Feed balancing dial - Adjust stitches when they are unbalanced. If you are doing a decorative stitch and it is wider on one side than the other this dial must be adjusted. There is a flat-head screwdriver tool in the machine accessories kit.



WARNING:

While in operation, always keep your eyes on the sewing area and do not touch any moving parts such as the thread take-up lever, handwheel or needle.

Always turn off the power switch and unplug from the power supply:

- when leaving the machine unattended.
- when attaching or removing parts.
- when cleaning the machine.

Do not place anything on the foot control.

2. Using the Machine

Before you get started you will have to learn how to fill the bobbin, thread the machine, select the stitch, install and thread the needle, install the bobbin and draw it up with the needle thread, and install your presser foot. The Janome machine manual is an excellent resource for this information. Sew on a piece of scrap fabric and adjust your tension. Test locking your stitches and reversing.

Practice feeding your fabric in straight lines, curves and turning sharp corners - you can practice this on a paper printout without thread. Print out practice sheets here:

<https://sewingsociety.com/free-sewing-practice-sheets-for-beginners>

Once you know the basic operation of the machine and how to move the fabric the next step is to familiarize yourself with common sewing terminology. Learn to use patterns (paper or projector!), make patterns or sew without patterns.

EPIC has a small library of sewing themed books available for reference (please leave them in the lab for everyone to access). There are also a lot of online resources for learning and sewing projects, including the Janome Youtube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/@JanomeJAI/videos>

